THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARATI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Total number of tourists who visited Kashmir during the year 1997 and 1998 were 16,138 and 1,09,883 respectively.

(c) Various measures taken by the Government to attract more tourists in the State include renovating and reviving of infrastructure, direct marketing of products in different metros of the countries, and arranging number of cultural programmes etc.

Decline in Tourists Inflow

196. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growth of tourist traffic was almost 0% for the year 1998-99;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the prevailing socio-political and recessionary conditions have not been conducive to foreign tourists; and

(c) if so, what are Government's views on this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARATI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Creation of Tourism Office in NE Region

197. DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether an office of the India Tourism for NE was created;

(b) if so, the objective thereof and present location of the office at Guwahati, achievements made so far on each of the objective;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Regional Director is operating his office from Culcutta;

(d) if not, the number of days he actually officiated in Assam in